

Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota Drug Abuse Trends: January 2014 Update

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ABSTRACT

Heroin and other opiate addiction continued to escalate in the Twin Cities in 2013. Opiate-related overdose deaths increased markedly in Hennepin County: 69 in 2013 (first half), compared with 84 in all of 2012. Heroin accounted for a record-high 13.6 percent of treatment admissions in 2013 (first half) compared with 12.9 percent in 2012. Other opiates (mostly prescription painkillers) accounted for 10.1 percent of treatment admissions in 2013 (first half) compared with 9.0 percent in 2012. Combining these, 23.7 percent of all treatment admissions in 2013 (first half) were for opiates, second only to admissions for alcohol (44.2 percent). Hospital emergency department visits for heroin nearly tripled from 2004 to 2011, and for narcotic analgesics more than doubled. Methamphetamine-related treatment admissions and law enforcement seizures increased in 2013 (first half). Ramsey County reported an accidental death of a 30 year-old male from probable 25I-NBOMe toxicity, a new synthetic hallucinogen, in June 2013. Exposures to LSD reported to the Hennepin Regional Poison Center tripled from 2012 to 2013 (from 15 to 45), while those involving "bath salts" and synthetic THC homologs declined.

PATTERNS AND TRENDS IN DRUG ABUSE

COCAINE

Cocaine-related treatment admissions fell in 2013 (first half), accounting for 4.1 percent of total admissions, compared with 5.2 percent in 2012 and 2011. Most cocaine admissions (76.9 percent) were for crack cocaine, 75.2 percent were age 35 or older, and 56.5 percent were African American.

In Hennepin County there were 16 cocaine-related deaths in 2013 (January through June), compared with 18 in all of 2012. There were 4 cocaine-related deaths in Ramsey County in 2013 (first half) compared with 3 in all of 2012. Cocaine-involved hospital emergency department visits declined 36.7 percent from 2006 to 2011.

Cocaine was noted as a primary, secondary, or tertiary drug in 20.6 percent of the total drug reports from law enforcement seizures that were analyzed by the National Forensic Laboratory Information System in the first half of 2013, compared with 17.9 percent in 2012.

HEROIN AND OTHER OPIATES

Heroin and other opiate addiction steadily increased in the Twin Cities over the past decade, and in 2013 remained issues of growing magnitude and consequence.

Heroin treatment admissions accounted for a record-high 13.6 percent of all admissions in 2013 (first half), compared with 12.9 percent in 2012, and 10.7 percent in 2011. Admissions for other opiates (mostly prescription painkillers) accounted for 10.1 percent of all admissions in 2013 (first half), compared with 9.0 percent in 2012, and 9.5 percent in 2011. Combining these, 23.7 percent of all treatment admissions in 2013 (first half) were for opiate addiction. By comparison in 2006, opiates accounted for 9.6 percent of total treatment admissions.

Hennepin County reported 69 opiate-related accidental deaths in 2013 (first half), compared with 84 in all of 2012. Of these deaths, 31 involved heroin. There were 22 opiate-related deaths in Ramsey County in 2013 (first half) compared with 45 in 2012 and 36 in 2011.

Hospital emergency department visits for heroin nearly tripled from 2004 to 2011 (from 1,189 to 3,493), and for narcotic analgesics more than doubled from (from 1,940 to 4,836).

Heroin was noted in 10.6 percent of drug reports from law enforcement seizures in 2013 (first half), compared with 10.2 percent in 2012. From 2012 to 2013, heroin exposures reported to the Hennepin Regional Poison Center grew from 127 to 147.

Hydrocodone with acetaminophen was the most frequently dispensed drug reported on the Minnesota Prescription Monitoring Program in November 2013. It accounted for 19.8 percent of all prescriptions. Oxycodone with acetaminophen accounted for 9.1 percent, and oxycodone hydrochloride 7.8 percent.

MARIJUANA

Marijuana use (in the past year) among 11th grade public school students, was reported by 31 percent of boys and 24 percent of girls in the metropolitan area, according to the 2013 Minnesota Student Survey.

Marijuana accounted for 16.0 percent of total treatment admissions in 2013 (first half), compared with 16.3 percent in 2012, and 16.6 percent in 2011. Nearly one-third of these patients (30.0 percent) were under the age of 18, and only 13.3 percent were age 35 or older.

Law enforcement agents seized more than 5,500 marijuana plants in a large-scale outdoor grow operation in July 2013, in Hinckley, Minnesota, located 78 miles north of the Twin Cities. The estimated value was \$4.1 million. Marijuana was noted in 7.9 percent of drug reports from law enforcement seizures in the first half of 2013, compared with 17.8 percent in 2012.

Cannabimimetic substances (known as synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic THC, or THC homologs), are a large family of synthetically produced cannabinoid compounds that are functionally similar to THC, the main psychoactive ingredient in plant marijuana. Known as "K2" or "Spice," and other brand names, these herbal mixtures are sold as "herbal incense." The Hennepin Regional Poison Center reported 110 exposures to THC homologs in 2013, compared with 157 in 2012.

METHAMPHETAMINE

Methamphetamine (meth) treatment admissions accounted for 9.4 percent of total treatment admissions in 2013 (first half) compared with 7.4 percent in 2012 and 6.4 percent in 2011. Among these admissions, 80.2 percent were White, smoking was the most common route of administration (65.3 percent), and 71.4 percent were age 26 or older.

In Hennepin County there were 7 methamphetamine-related deaths in 2013 (first half), compared with 14 in 2012. Ramsey County reported 4 deaths in 2013 (first half) compared with 7 in 2012. Methamphetamine was noted in 31.5 percent of drug reports from law enforcement seizures in 2013 (first half), compared with 22.6 percent in 2012.

HALLUCINOGENS AND EMERGING SYNTHETIC DRUGS

In both 2012 and 2013 the Hennepin Regional Poison Center reported 19 exposures involving 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine, known as MDMA or ecstasy. LSD cases tripled from 2012 to 2013 (from 15 to 45).

In Ramsey County there was an accidental death of a 30 year-old male from probable 25I-NBOMe toxicity in June 2013. "N-bomb" is also known as "legal acid," "smiles," or simply "25-I." The term is used in reference to any of these closely related synthetic hallucinogens: 25I-NBOMe, 25C-NBOMe, or 25B-NBOMe. The Hennepin Regional Poison Center reported 6 cases of 25-I in 2013.

Substances sold as "bath salts" often contain substituted cathinones, which are synthetically produced chemicals including methylenedioxypyrovalerone (MDPV), mephedrone and methylone. There were 144 "bath salt" exposures reported to Hennepin Regional Poison Center in 2011, 87 in 2012, and 50 in 2013.

"Molly" is a new term for allegedly "molecular" MDMA. In 2013 there were 18 "Molly" exposures reported to the Hennepin Regional Poison Center. Molly does not always contain MDMA, however. For example, over 400 Molly capsules seized and analyzed in Florida, actually contained methylone, a compound commonly found in bath salts. Methylone was noted in 28 of the 2,343 drug reports from local law enforcement seizures in the first half of 2013, compared with 13 in 2012.

2C-series phenethylamines, especially 2,5-dimethoxy-4-ethylphenethylamine (2C-E), 4-bromo-2,5-dimethyl-oxyphenethylamine (2C-B) and 2,5-dimethoxy-4-iodophenethylamine (2C-I), are consumed for their stimulant and hallucinogenic effects and typically sold online as "research chemicals" that are "not intended for human consumption." There were 24 exposures to 2C-E and related analogues in 2012 and 35 in 2013. The chemical compound 1-benzylpiperazine (BZP), abused for its amphetamine-like effects, was present in 97 drug reports from law enforcement seizures in 2012 (1.6 percent), and 24 reports in the first half of 2013 (1.0 percent).

ALCOHOL

Alcohol use (past year) among 11th graders in the metropolitan area, was reported by 41 percent of boys and 42 percent of girls. In 2013 (first half), 44.2 percent of treatment admissions were for alcohol, compared with 46.5 in 2012 and 49.2 percent in 2011.

DATA SOURCES

This report is produced twice annually for an epidemiological surveillance network of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and presents the most recent data from multiple sources including:

Addiction treatment data regarding patients admitted to addiction treatment programs in the 5-county Twin Cities metropolitan area are from the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Normative Evaluation System (DAANES) of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (through June 2013). Counties are Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington.

Mortality data on drug-related deaths are from the Ramsey County Medical Examiner and the Hennepin County Medical Examiner (through June 2013). Hennepin County cases include accidental overdose deaths in which drug toxicity or mixed drug toxicity was the cause of death and those in which the recent use of a drug was listed as a significant condition contributing to the death. Ramsey County cases include accidental overdose deaths in which drug toxicity or mixed drug toxicity was the cause of death.

Hospital emergency department (ED) data are from the Drug Abuse Warning Network, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, accessed 9/12/2012. These weighted estimates of ED visits are based on a representative sample of non-Federal, general, short-stay hospitals with 24-hour EDs in the 11-county Minneapolis/St. Paul/Bloomington, MN-WI Metropolitan Statistical Area.

Poison control data on drug exposures are from the Hennepin Regional Poison Center, Hennepin County Medical Center, Minneapolis, as reported on the American Association of Poison Control Centers, National Poison Data System (through 2013).

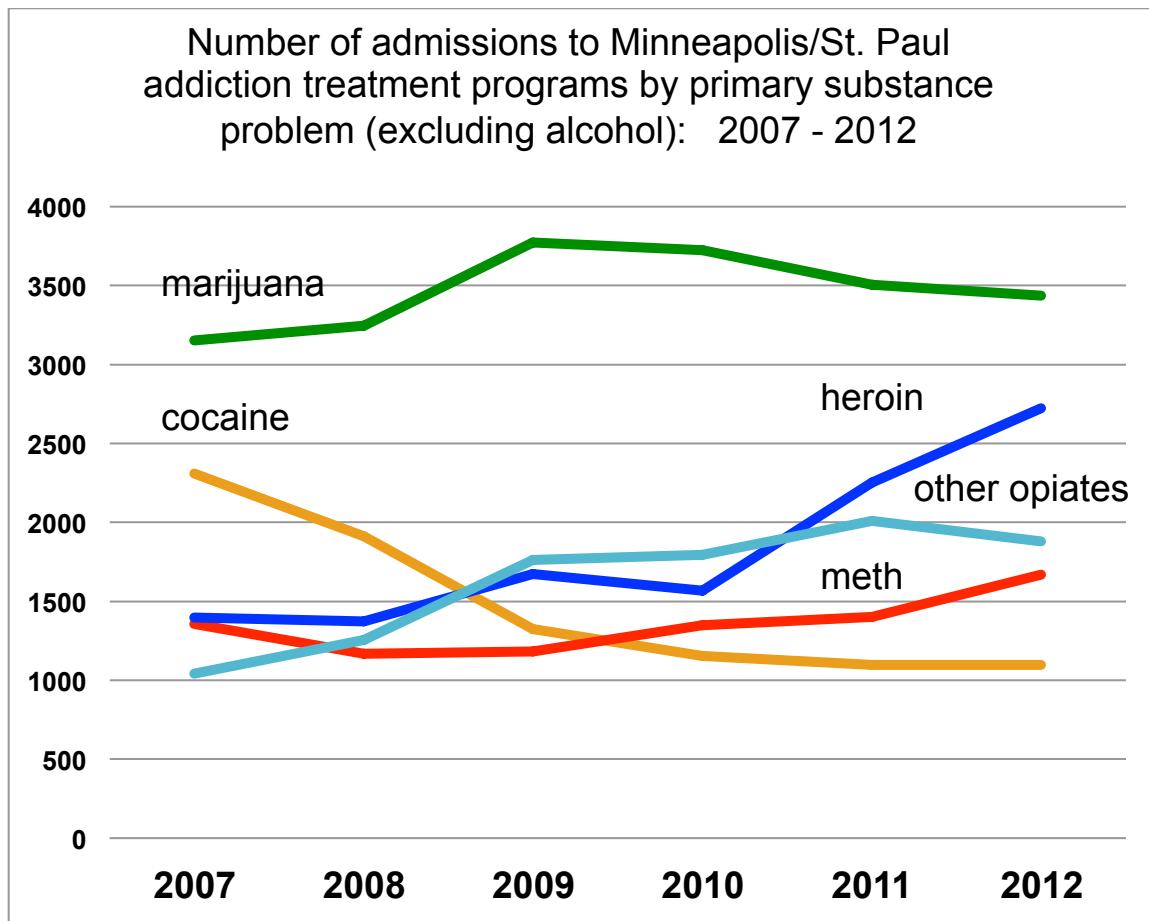
Prescription drug data are from the Minnesota Prescription Monitoring Program, Minnesota Board of Pharmacy, November 2013.

Crime lab data are from the National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS), U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), on primary, secondary and tertiary drug reports identified from items seized by law enforcement in the 7-county metropolitan area and analyzed (through June 2013). Counties are: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington. No St. Paul Police Department Laboratory data after May 2012.

Student survey data on drug use among 11th grade public school students in the 7-county metropolitan area are from the 2013 Minnesota Student Survey of the Center for Health Statistics, Minnesota Department of Health.

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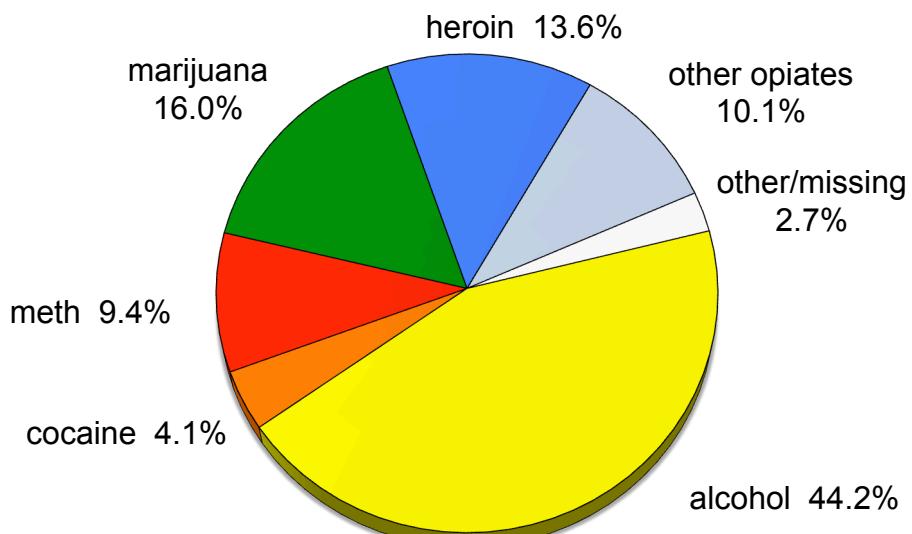
Exhibit 1



SOURCE: Drug and Alcohol Normative Evaluation System (DAANES), Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013.

Exhibit 2

Admissions to Minneapolis/St. Paul addiction treatment programs by primary substance problem:
January through June 2013



SOURCE: Drug and Alcohol Normative Evaluation System (DAANES), Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013.

Exhibit 3

**Characteristics of patients admitted to Minneapolis/St. Paul
addiction treatment programs by primary substance problem:
January through June 2013**

TOTAL ADMISSIONS 11,352	ALCOHOL 5,014 44.2%	MARIJUANA 1,815 16.0%	COCAINE 460 4.1%	METH 1,064 9.4%	HEROIN 1,546 13.6%	OTHER OPIATES 1,145 10.1%
GENDER						
% Male	69.1	77.2	57.0	63.6	64.7	51.0
% Female	30.9	22.8	43.0	36.4	35.3	49.0
RACE/ETHNICITY						
% White	73.0	51.1	28.0	80.2	64.4	77.2
% African Am	14.6	30.3	56.5	1.9	19.5	4.7
% Am Indian	3.0	3.1	3.9	2.6	6.1	8.5
% Hispanic	4.7	7.8	6.1	6.0	5.1	4.4
% Asian/Pacific Isl	1.9	1.2	1.3	5.2	1.3	1.9
% Other	2.8	6.5	4.1	4.1	3.5	3.3
AGE						
% 17 and under	1.4	30.0	1.1	3.1	.8	1.7
% 18 - 25	16.3	38.5	5.4	25.6	39.0	27.2
% 26 - 34	23.6	18.1	18.3	38.3	27.6	33.6
% 35 +	58.7	13.3	75.2	33.1	32.6	37.5
ROUTE OF ADMINISTRATION						
% Oral/multiple	100	1.3	-	6.2	1.0	65.5
% Smoking		98.7	76.9	65.3	7.8	5.1
% Snorting		-	22.5	8.4	26.9	18.0
% Injection		-	.7	20.1	64.3	11.4
% CURRENT SMOKER	59.8	68.8	78.3	78.5	84.0	71.3

SOURCE: Drug and Alcohol Normative Evaluation System (DAANES), Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013.

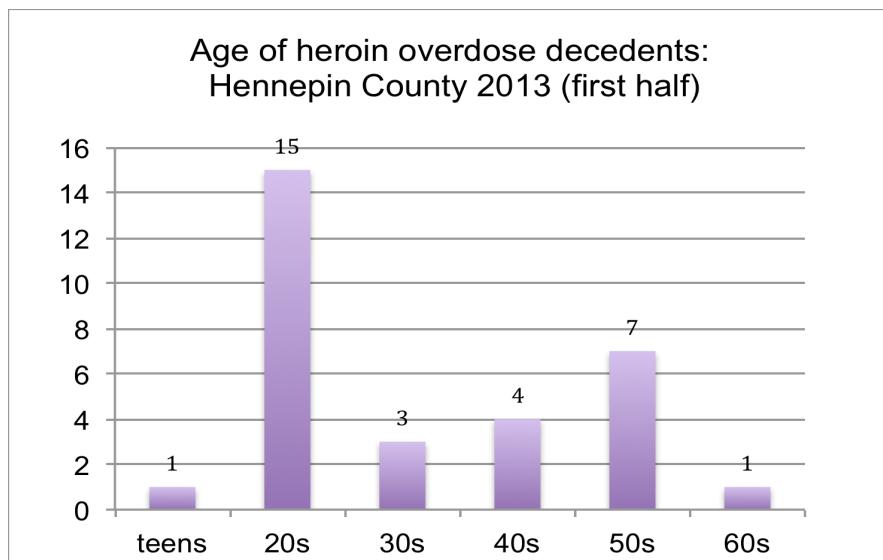
Exhibit 4

Drug abuse-related deaths in Hennepin and Ramsey County:
2008 through 2013 (first half)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 JANUARY THRU JUNE
HENNEPIN					
Opiates	77	65	84	84	69
Cocaine	10	25	28	18	16
Methamphetamine	6	9	7	14	7
RAMSEY					
Opiates	36	27	36	45	22
Cocaine	11	7	6	3	4
Methamphetamine	7	4	3	7	4

SOURCE: Hennepin County Medical Examiner and Ramsey County Medical Examiner, 2013.

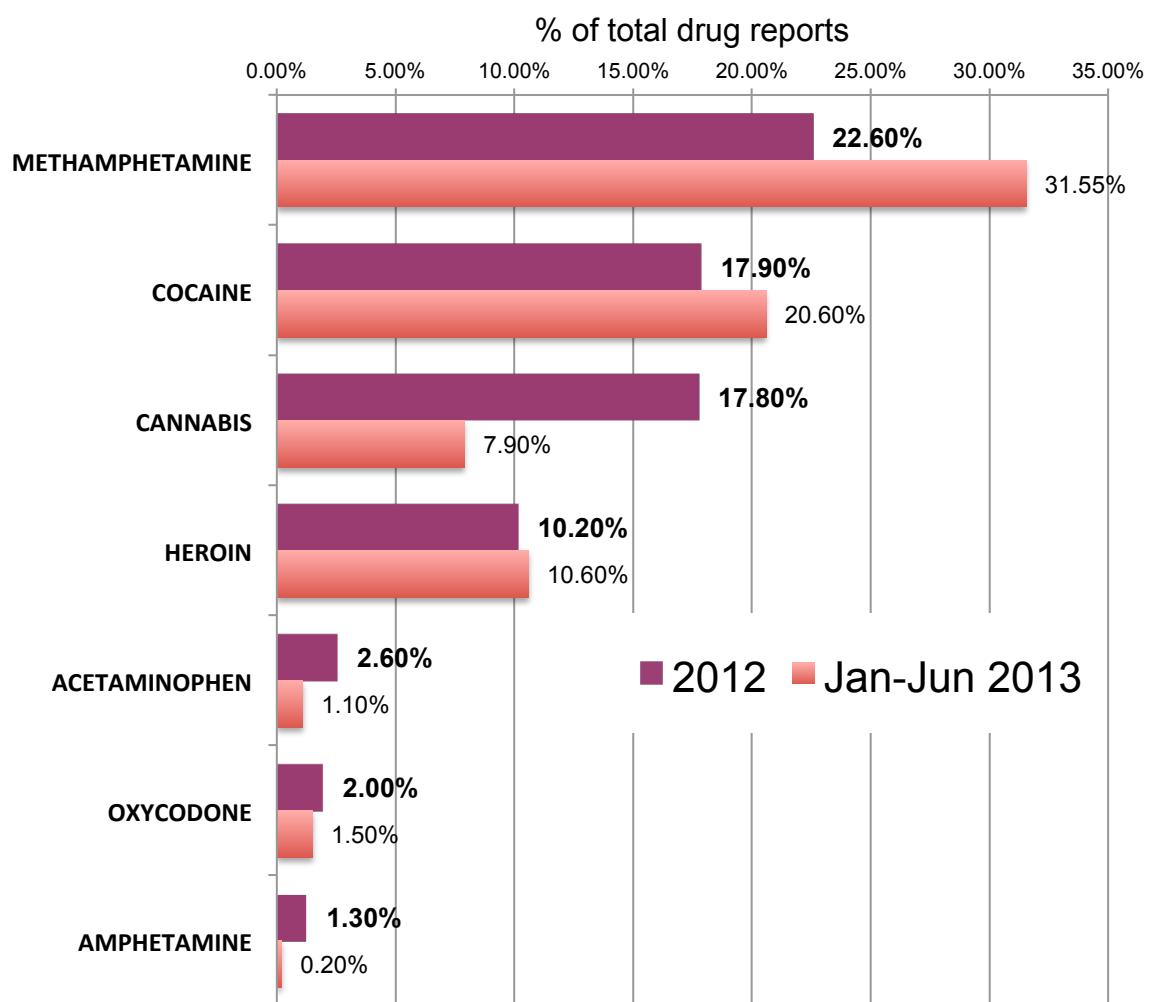
Exhibit 5



SOURCE: Hennepin County Medical Examiner, 2013.

Exhibit 6

Changes in the most frequently identified drugs of total analyzed drug reports in the Minneapolis/St.Paul metro area:
2012 vs. 2013 (first half)



SOURCE: National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS), U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) queried on May 7 and December 12, 2013 according to location of seizure. All federal, state and local laboratory data are included in the total number of drug items seized as primary, secondary or tertiary drugs in the 7-county metro area including the counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington in calendar 2012 and January through June 2013. St. Paul crime lab did not report data after May 2012. Total drug reports analyzed = 6,067 in 2012, and 2,343 from January through June 2013.

Exhibit 7

**Exposures to selected drugs reported to
Hennepin Regional Poison Center: 2010 - 2013**

	2010	2011	2012	2013
THC Homologs	28	149	157	110
Bath Salts	5	144	87	50
2CE, Analogues	10	23	24	35
MDMA	26	24	19	19
LSD	9	7	15	45
Hydrocodone	621	655	713	605
Oxycodone	580	575	636	579
Heroin	52	78	127	147

SOURCE: Hennepin Regional Poison Center, Hennepin County Medical Center, 2014.

Exhibit 8

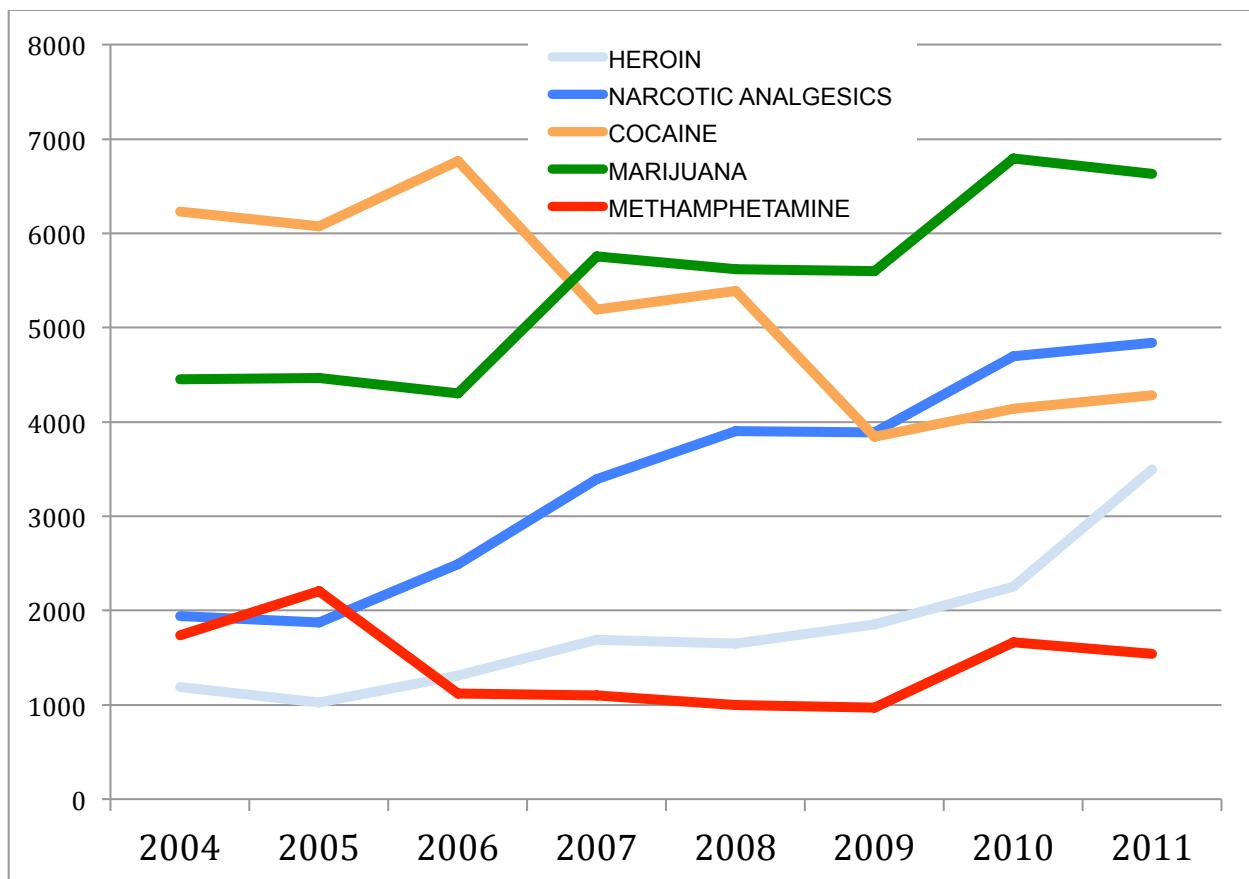
**Minnesota Prescription Monitoring Program:
Top prescriptions dispensed in November 2013**

DRUG	# OF PRESCRIPTIONS	% OF ALL PRESCRIPTIONS
Hydrocodone with acetaminophen	106,153	19.8
Oxycodone HCL (9.1%) and oxycodone with acetaminophen (7.8%)	90,197	16.9
Dextroamphetamine/amphetamine	50,313	9.4
Zolpidem tartrate	43,779	8.9
Lorazepam	38,840	7.3
Methylphenidate HCL	31,956	6.0
Clonazepam	31,930	5.9
Alprazolam	27,990	5.2
Acetaminophen with codeine	14,017	2.6

SOURCE: Prescription Monitoring Program Monthly Report, Issue 11, November 2013, Minnesota Board of Pharmacy.
Total prescriptions dispensed in November 2013 = 534,870.

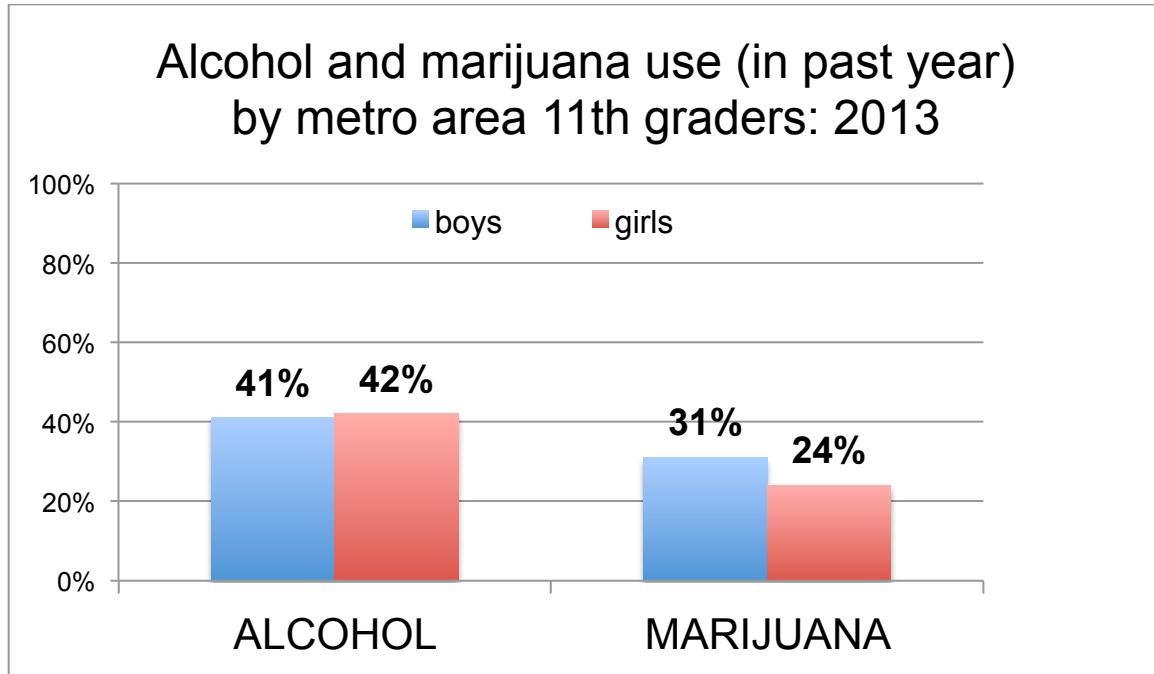
Exhibit 9

Drug-related emergency department visits in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Statistical Area: 2004 - 2011



SOURCE: Drug Abuse Warning Network, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, accessed 9/12/2012. These weighted estimates of ED visits are based on a representative sample of non-Federal, general, short-stay hospitals with 24-hour EDs in the Minneapolis/St. Paul/Bloomington, MN-WI Metropolitan Statistical Area.

Exhibit 10



SOURCE: 2013 Minnesota Student Survey, Minnesota Center for Health Statistics, Minnesota Department of Health, 2014.